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# **Mapping Information Seeking Behaviour of Students at Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli**

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## **ABSTRACT:**

It is mere information that attracts readers to the library. The present examination targets portraying the information looking for example understudies of Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli. Students were qualified by convenience sampling method for the study. The examination uncovers that: Majority of the respondents are in 20-24 years age gathering. 'Week by week Visit' (59.1%) is the most sort out time utilized library period. 41.8% respondents visit the library for getting subjective data. Lending area 71.9% are the most visited segments of the library. 44.8% can use OPAC for searching information. Newspaper section is also an hotspot for getting regular updates among 28.6% users followed by Internet with 23.9% respondents. Books are the most favored channel of data for 34.7% as a source to collect relevant information. Dominant part of the respondents, is satisfied with the lighting and seating arrangements in the library. 91.8% respondents are satisfied with the library administrations. A detailed study on the usage pattern and behavior of respondents along with certain suggestions have been indicated to improve the library services further.

## **KEYWORDS:**

Information sources, convenience sampling, Information seeking behavior, OPAC, Library administration, Information need, Level of satisfaction, Search strategy.

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

The information seeking behavior of users are changing drastically in an academic environment. Depending on their discipline of study, during the period which a particular group of students access the library can vary based on various limitations. In this context of ever changing electronic environment, their expectation of users, needs, demands, approaches and attitudes too, have changed progressively. The way users view the library as a place for obtaining information, their way of approaching various documents available in the library, the manner in which they seek information, the changes in need for different kinds of electronic resources. Users prefer different channels of information, their frequency of visit to the library have changed.

Information seeking behavior is an important area for library professionals to acquire as an area of research. Users effort to acquire information is the need to fill in the gap of your knowledge. Information behavior can be studied to understand the information seeking or passive behaviours

such as encountering information, as well as purposive behaviours that do not involve seeking, such as actively avoiding information. Information seeking behaviour that results from recognition of some need (Wilson, 1981) is defined by Kriekelas (1983, p. 6-7) "as any activity of an individual that is undertaken to identify a perceives that the current state of possessed knowledge is less than that needed to deal with some issue (or problem)".

## **2. MANONMANIAM SUNDARANAR UNIVERSITY**

The University was established by the Government of Tamil Nadu as a teaching-cum-affiliating University on 7th September, 1990 to cater to the long-felt needs of the people of the three southern most districts of Tamil Nadu viz., Tirunelveli, Tuticorin, and Kanyakumari. It is named after the renowned Tamil Poet scholar, Professor P. Sundaram Pillai (1855-1897), the author of the famous verse drama Manonmaniam. It is his poem that has become "Tamil Thaaivaazhthu" the official invocation song sung in all functions in Tamilnadu. The motto of the University is "Reaching the Unreached". More than 3750 students are studying in various departments of this institution directly. The main focus of the university is to produce individuals who have the expertise and intellectual curiosity to make a difference in their profession and the society and in conducting the research needed to meet the challenges facing the contemporary world.

## **4. REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

Kumar and others (2019) conducted a study on the usage of print and electronic resources at Madurai Diraviyam Thanyumanavar (MDT) Hindu College, Tirunelveli. It was found that 43.1% male population were satisfied with seeking information from print resources. They further inferred that more than one third of the respondents search electronic resources using title of the article.

Pratap (2016) highlighted the information seeking behaviour and satisfaction of library users at Chhaju Ram Memorial Jat College, Hisar. He found out that 85.80% respondents visit the library to consult or borrow study material. About 60% users are satisfied with the adequacy of books in the library. 51.37% respondents are partially satisfied and 32.79% are fully satisfied with the library services. However none of the respondents were satisfied with the ICT based infrastructure, resources and services provided in the library as well as college.

Bhattacharjee and others (2014) carried out a study on the Information needs and Information seeking behaviour of college library users of Cocher District, Assam: A Case Study. They found out that 74.8% respondents wanted their reading material collection to be improved and suggested a change in the procurement of collection development policy. Awareness among the library users on the basis of information source should be done by conducting workshop, conference and an urgent need to automate the college libraries was recommended.

## **5. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The objectives of the study are:

- i. To list the primary purpose of using the library by the respondents
- ii. To identify the frequency of library usage by the respondents.
- iii. To know the types of materials sought by the respondents.
- iv. To trace out the methods, reasons for and problems in seeking information.
- v. To know the level of satisfaction of information sources and library facilities.
- vi. To rate the services & collection of the library & the channels of information.
- vii. To identify the document preference pattern of the respondents.
- viii. To identify the sources used by the respondents for getting current information and exam-oriented textbooks.

## **6. METHODOLOGY**

6.1 Research Type: The study is a descriptive survey research.

6.2 Sample: Convenience Sampling was followed to obtain data from the users.

6.2.1. Name of the Institution: Manonmaniam Sundaranar University

6.2.2. Selection of Samples: The Sample represents 196 respondents studying in this University. 196 library users were chosen by the researcher as per his choice that is the first 196 willing library visitors on the days of data collection.

6.3 Tool for Data Collection: Close ended Questionnaire was used to collect data from the chosen sample. A simple but a clearly presented questionnaire with 42 questions was used as a tool.

6.4 Method of Data Collection: The data was collected from the sample users in the month of September 2019. The questionnaires were distributed to the library users on the days of visit by the researcher personally.

## 7. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The data collected was simplified by means of tables using single column and double column or triple column tables prepared with the help of tally. The tabulated data was analysed using simple percentage method in datasheets to draw necessary inferences in order to come to a conclusion.

### 7.1. Age-wise Distribution

Table 1 shows the age-wise distribution of respondents. 156(79.6%) respondents belong to 20-24 years age group and 30 (15.3%) respondents are in 25-29 years age group, followed by 10 (5.1%) respondents who are in 30 & above years age group. Majority of the respondents belong to 20-24 years age group.

Users were chosen by the researcher as per his convenience i.e. first 196 willing library visitors on the days of data collection.

Sl. No.	Age (years)	No of Respondents	%
1.	20-24	156	79.6
2.	25-29	30	15.3
3.	30 & above	10	5.1
Total		196	100

Table 1: Age wise respondents (Source: *Primary data*)

### 7.2. Frequent Visit to the Library

Table 2 shows 59.1% users visit the library once a week and 27.6% respondents visit every day. While 10.2% visit the library once in two days, 3.1% visit the library once in 4 days. Hence 'Weekly Visit' highly preferred by the respondents under study.

Sl. No.	Time spent	No of Respondents	%
1.	Everyday	54	27.6
2.	Once in Two	20	10.2
3.	Once in 4 Day	6	3.1
4.	Once a week	116	59.1
Total		196	100

Table: 2 frequency of visits (Source: *Primary data*)

### 7.3. Purpose of visiting library

Table 3 indicates the different purpose respondents visit the library. 41.8% respondents visit the library for getting information based on their discipline of study. While 20.4% visit library for general purpose, 4.1% respondents obtain current affairs related information. 29.6% respondents visit the library for reference followed by 4.1% respondents who come for recreational information.

Sl. No.	Purpose	No of Respondents	%
1.	Subject Information	82	41.8
2.	General Information	40	20.4
3.	Current Information	8	4.1
4.	Reference Information	58	29.6
5.	Recreational Information	8	4.1
Total		196	100

Table: 3 Purpose of Visit (Source: *Primary data*)

### 7.4. Types of Materials Sought by the Respondents

Table 4 demonstrates that general books are mostly sought by 21.9% students followed by reference books used by 20.9% respondents. While 17.3% respondents search for textbooks, 6.6% look for periodicals in the library. It can be seen that the least sought materials are periodicals.

Sl. No.	Materials	No of Respondents	%
1.	Textbooks	34	17.3
2.	Periodicals	13	6.6
3.	Newspapers	37	18.9
4.	Reference Books	41	20.9

5.	General books	43	21.9
6.	Competitive exam	28	14.4
Total		196	100

Table: 4 Materials used by the Respondents (Source: *Primary data*)

## 7.5. Utilization of University Library Services

Table 5 shows the level of satisfaction of the respondents on the library services. 71.9% respondents feel good about book lending service and 108 of them rated the library reference service as good. While 98 respondents are satisfied with library current awareness service. 42 respondents are dissatisfied with inter-library loan service of the library while none is dissatisfied with book lending service.

Sl. No.	Services	Good	%	Satisfactory	%	Unsatisfactory	%
1	Book lending	141	71.9	55	28.1	00	0
2	Book Reservation	106	54.1	86	43.8	04	2.1
3	Inter library loan	81	41.05	73	41.05	42	17.9
4	Reference Service	108	55.1	69	35.2	19	9.7
5	Current Awareness Services	98	50	85	43.3	13	6.7
6	Selective Prescriptions of Information	88	44.9	84	42.9	24	12.2
7	Display of New Arrivals	99	50.5	78	39.8	19	9.7
8	Newspaper Clipping Services	112	57.1	72	36.7	12	6.1

Table: 5 (Source: *Primary data*)

## 7.6. Methods of searching for information

Table 6 reveals that among 196 respondents, 32.7% respondents search for information by going to the shelf directly, 44.8% respondents start their searching from the online public access catalogue (OPAC) and mere 22.5% respondents ask for librarian's help in isearching of information.

Sl. No	Methods of Searching Information	No. of Information	%
1.	Searching on the Self	64	32.7
2.	Starting from OPAC	88	44.8
3.	Asking help from	44	22.5
	Total	196	100

Table: 6 (Source: *Primary data*)

### 7.7. Preference of Documents

Table 7 shows the preference of the respondents on various documents in getting their required information. 79% 152 of the respondents prefer Subjective books than all other documents, 14.3% of them prefer to use periodicals. While 34.2% of the respondents prefer online sources, 4.1% prefer to use conference proceedings and 18.8% use non-print sources.

Sl. No.	Preference	No of Respondents	%
1.	Subject books	56	28.6
2.	Periodicals	28	14.3
3.	Conference Proceeding	08	4.1
4.	Non print Sources	37	18.8
5.	Online Sources	67	34.2
Total		196	100

Table: 7 ( Source: *Primary data*)

### 7.8. Sources for Current Information

It is obvious to note that newspapers are the most popular source for getting current information among 56 respondents followed by Internet with 47 respondents. Notice boards are ranked fifth with 29 respondents and journals are ranked third with 31 respondents.

Sl. No.	Current Information	Ranking	No. of Respondents	%
1.	News papers	I	56	28.6
2.	Internet	II	47	23.9
3.	Journal	III	31	15.8
4.	Audio	IV	33	16.8
5.	Notice	V	29	14.9
Total			196	100

Source: *Primary data*

### 7.9. Sources for Exam-oriented Textbooks

It is clear that 40.8% of the respondents are getting exam-oriented textbooks from their departmental library and 27.6% of the respondents get the same from their teachers. While 14.3% of the respondents obtain necessary exam-oriented textbooks from their senior students, 15.2% of them get it from their classmates

Sl. No.	Source of Learning	No. of Respondents	%
1.	Departmental Library	80	40.8
2.	Teachers	54	27.6

3.	Senior Students	28	14.3
4.	Classmates	30	15.2
5.	Other libraries	04	2.1
Total		196	100

Table: 9 (Source: *Primary data*)

### 7.10. Reason for Seeking Information

It is seen from Table 10 that the most of the respondents 106 seeking information to prepare themselves for class work and to know the subject. While 28.6% respondents search for information to get awareness of knowledge on the set topic(s), 16 users look for information to write articles for journals.

Sl. No.	Source of information	No of Respondents	%
1.	For preparing classwork for knowing subject	106	54.1
2.	For Awareness of Knowledge	56	28.6
3.	For Participating in Seminar/Conference	18	9.2
4.	For writing Articles	16	8.1
Total		196	100

Table 10 (Source: *Primary data*)

### 7.11. Ranking the Channels of Information

It is understood from Table 11 that books are the most preferred channel of information for 68 respondents followed by the journals as the channels of information preferred second by 38 respondents. The channels of communications namely ‘web information’ secured third position, conference Proceedings’ and “CD-ROMs/DVDs” attained fourth position by 22, 22 respondents respectively and thesis/ dissertation obtained fifth rank as a channel of information by 18 respondents.

Sl. No.	Channels of Information	Ranking	No. of Respondents	%
1.	Books	I	68	34.7
2.	Journals	II	38	19.4
3.	Information Through Web	III	28	14.3
4.	Conference Proceedings	IV	22	11.2
5.	CD/ROMS/DVDs	IV	22	11.2
6.	Thesis/Dissertation	V	18	9.2
Total			196	100



Table: 11 (Source: *Primary data*)

## 7.12. Problems in Seeking Information by the Respondents

Table 12 reveals the problems which are faced by the respondents in seeking information. Lack of time is the major problem faced by 33.2% of the respondent and 'Non-availability of material' is the next big problem faced by 42 of them. While 'Existence of Old materials' is the problem for 16.8% of the respondents. While 2% of the respondents feel that library staff are unwilling to serve, 1%(1) of the respondents opined that information being so vast it is a problem faced by them in seeking information.

Sl. No.	Problems	No. of Respondents	%
1.	Materials is not available	42	21.3
2.	Library Staffs are unwilling for Service	04	2.1
3.	Incomplete Information Materials	12	6.1
4.	Do not know how to Use the Catalogue	14	7.1
5.	Lack of time	65	33.2
6.	Lack of knowledge Using The Library	16	8.2
7.	Information Scattered in To many ways	08	4.1
8.	Information is Too Vast	02	1.1
9.	Some of Information Materials are old	33	16.8
Total		196	100

Table 12 Source: *Primary data*

## 7.13. Level of Satisfaction of Information Sources

Table 13 exhibits that 90.3 % of the respondents are satisfied with books and 88.3 % of them are satisfied with reference books and newspapers. While 78.6 are satisfied with journals/periodicals, 73.9% of them are contented with general magazines. While 38.3 % of the respondents are dissatisfied with competitive exam magazines, just 9.7% of them are dissatisfied with books.

Sl. No	Sources	Satisfied	%	Dissatisfied	%
1.	Books	177	90.3	19	9.7
2.	Reference Books	173	88.3	23	11.7
3.	Journals/Periodicals	154	78.6	42	21.4
4.	News Papers	171	87.2	25	12.8

5.	General Magazines	145	73.9	51	26.1
6.	Competitive Exams	121	61.7	75	38.3
7.	Any Others	146	74.5	50	25.5

Table: 13 (Source: *Primary data*)

#### 7.14. Level of Satisfaction-Library Facilities

Table 14 depicts the level of satisfaction felt by the respondents on various library facilities/arrangement. While 72.4% of the respondents opined that lighting is good in the library, 70.4% feel good about library ventilation. And 140 respondents remarked that seating arrangement in the library is good. While 106 respondents expressed that they are satisfactory with cataloguing facility. While none is unsatisfied with book arrangement, 12 of them are dissatisfied with cataloguing provisions in the library.

Sl. No.	Library Facilities	Good	%	Satisfactory	%	Unsatisfactory	%
1.	Ventilation	138	70.4	52	26.5	06	3.1
2.	Lighting	142	72.4	48	24.5	06	3.1
3.	Cataloguing	106	54.1	78	39.8	12	6.1
4.	Books arrangement	126	64.3	70	35.7	00	0
5.	Seating	140	71.4	54	27.6	02	1.0

Table 14 (Source: *Primary data*)

#### 7.15. Satisfaction of Library Service

Table 15 makes it clear that 180 (91.8%) respondents are satisfied with the library services and 16(8.2%) respondents are not satisfied with library services.

Table 15 Satisfaction of Library Service

Sl.No	Library Services	No of Respondents	%
1.	Satisfied	180	91.8
2.	Not Satisfied	16	8.2

Source: *Primary data*

### 8. FINDINGS

- 79.6% of the users belong to age gap 20-24 indicating that they are mostly students pursuing masters and integrated courses in various disciplines.
- 59.1% visit the library once a week due to absence of library period in their class routine.
- 41.8% respondents visit the library to make notes on their subject.
- 71.9% are satisfied with the book lending services.
- 44.8% use the OPAC to locate their document in the library.
- 40.8% rely on text books made available in the department library.
- 54.1% prepare for their home assignments given by their subject instructors.
- 34.7% still rely on books to attain information.

- overall 91.8% are satisfied with the library services.

## 9. SUGGESTIONS

- The library users of 25 years and above age must be encouraged to use the library effectively by providing suitable resources and services personally aiming at them.
- A Library period can be added to the class routine for the students so that they can visit and use the library frequently.
- The reference section of the library should be made attractive to draw the attention of library users.
- Latest editions of competitive exam books and magazines should be made available to the users.
- A user study on the ‘‘ list of books / materials most wanted’ may be conducted to determine exact requirements.
- Inter-library loan, can be introduced to enhance resources sharing with the co-operation of other University libraries.
- Enough shelf-guides and Bay guides may be displayed in the stack room.
- E-resources may be added to the library collections.
- Sufficient number of computers with greater band width and internet connection may be provided in the library.

## 10. Conclusion:

In this rapidly changing world of information explosion, the libraries need to transform by reshaping, redesigning themselves with updated Information communication and technology (ICT) infrastructure. Library professionals need to explore the usefulness, relevance and adequacy of these components such as infrastructure, sources and services of a library in this transfigured working and serving environment. The users are the major players in the market. Their information seeking pattern should be studied in order to provide better services in the library. Here we need to identify and solve the problems of remaining 8.2% users who are not satisfied with library services. Hence obtaining information seeking behaviour of the respondents is a major area of research to successfully attract users to the library.

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